

Message Text

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22

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 OMB-01 IO-11 ACDA-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NSCE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00

OPR-02 A-01 /089 W

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O 231040Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8293

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0737

DELIVER TO NEA/ARN/DRAPER AT OPENING OF BUSINESS. ALSO
PASS TO SECRETARY'S PARTY FOR DAY.

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: 0900 LEBANON REPORT

1. CEASEFIRE BEGUN LAST NIGHT IS STILL HOLDING. THERE IS
OF COURSE ISOLATED SHOOTING BUT IT HAS NOT SET OFF ANY
FIREFIGHT IN OR AROUND THE CITY. ARMY UNITS WERE
HARD PRESSED IN MANY PARTS OF THE COUNTRY YESTERDAY
AS PALESTINIAN AND OTHER LEFTIST TROOPS ENGAGED. DATT
REPORTS THAT ARMY IS BOTTLED UP IN CAMPS AND BARRACKS
AROUND THE COUNTRY, HAVING LOST SOME (BAALBECK IS AN
EXAMPLE) YESTERDAY. BY SAME TOKEN NEITHER ARMY NOR
PALESTINIANS HAVE GONE ALL OUT IN RECENT FIGHTING.
LEBANESE AIR FORCE MADE ITS SECOND AIR STRIKE IN THIS
CRISIS WHEN IT HIT ARTILLERY BATTERIES SHELLING
REFUGEES IN CHAMOUN'S HOME TOWN OF SAADIYAT YESTERDAY.

2. KHADDAM IS CONTINUING HIS CONSULTATIONS HERE, AND
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WE UNDERSTAND HE WILL MEET WITH GEMAYEL TODAY. CHAMOUN'S

NPL PARTY HAS ISSUED A STATEMENT WHICH APPEARS TO RAISE NEW ISSUES, SUCH AS NO DISCUSSION ON IMPLEMENTATION OF POLITICAL CHANGES UNTIL CEASEFIRE HAS HELD FOR AT LEAST FORTY-FIVE DAYS. WE SUSPECT, HOWEVER, THAT THIS IS ONLY ANOTHER STAGE IN THE BARGAINING WHICH WE CAN EXPECT TO CONTINUE. SEVERAL GOOD SOURCES INDICATE THAT AN AGREEMENT HAS BEEN SIGNED AND FRANGIE IS GOING TO ANNOUNCE IT TO THE NATION TODAY. IT CONTAINS ALL THE POINTS WE HAVE BEEN LED TO EXPECT.

3. HELPFUL SISCO INTERVIEW ON WEDNESDAY WHICH REITERATED U.S. SUPPORT FOR SYRIAN EFFORTS TO REACH AGREEMENT HERE AND STATED USG WILL NOT INTERVENE IN LEBANON WAS CARRIED BY ARABIC AND FRENCH LANGUAGE PRESS THIS MORNING. FRENCH LANGUAGE PAPER HEADLINED STORY, HOWEVER, AS STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL SOLUTION TO GUARANTEE PEACE IN LEBANON. THIS AGAIN POINTS OUT CHRISTIAN TENDENCY TO GRASP AT STRAWS. I THINK IT PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT AT THIS JUNCTURE THAT WE DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO AVOID ENCOURAGING CHAMOUNISTS AND OTHERS IN THEIR MISTAKEN BELIEF THAT SOME SORT OF INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION WILL PERMIT SOLUTION OF CRISIS WITHOUT EVEN MINIMAL CHRISTIAN CONCESSIONS INVOLVED IN AGREEMENT UNDER SYRIAN AUSPICES. FOR FIRST TIME IN MONTHS WE ARE IN A POSITION TO APPLAUD A RAYMOND EDDE STATEMENT: HE IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE WORLD IS SICK AND TIRED OF THE BEHAVIOR OF THE CHRISTIANS IN LEBANON AND POINTS OUT THAT AGREEMENT REACHED UNDER SYRIAN AUSPICES TODAY CONTAINS EXACTLY SAME POINTS THAT COULD HAVE BEEN AGREED TO SEVERAL MONTHS AGO IN INTRA-LEBANESE NEGOTIATING FORUMS.

4. AIRPORT REMAINS CLOSED, BUT WE ARE TOLD OPENING OF AIRPORT IS A PART OF THE AGREEMENT AND THERE IS GOOD CHANCE IT WILL REOPEN SOON, PROVIDED AGREEMENT STICKS. WE SHALL BE EVACUATING LARGE NUMBER OF EMBASSY STAFF ON ONE OF THE FIRST PLANES OUT TO ATHENS.
LAMBRAKIS

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED TO SECRETARY'S PARTY. CONFIDENTIAL
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